



BRAINSTORMING

Volume 3, Issue 3

May/June 2018

Brainstorming is an on-line publication of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) - Wichita Affiliate. It is made up of articles encompassing the topic of mental illness. Information provided in this e-magazine is for informational purposes only, has not been researched or independently verified and is not intended as medical advice. Views published in Brainstorming are those of the individual authors and contributors and do not reflect and are not endorsed as local, state or national NAMI positions. To read the full articles, right click on the "Read more" link following the introduction to each article and open the hyperlink. To submit articles and other material to be considered for inclusion in this e-magazine, contact Lynn Kohr at lkohr@cox.net.

Justin Peck: Taking the Wheel of His Bipolar

When Justin Peck gets behind the wheel of his 4-wheel drive race truck, the outside world ceases to exist. Gone are the manic highs and depressive lows. Once No. 49 dons his racing helmet, the outside chaos of the world disappears and his only focus is on winning....Diagnosed with bipolar disorder I, Peck compares the task of guiding his 4,000-pound, 800-horsepower truck on an off-road course, to learning how to balance the ups and downs in his life.

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How Practicing Mindfulness Can Change Your Life

“Mindfulness” is a word that’s gotten a lot of attention lately. It sounds good, it’s usually accompanied by calming images that look very appealing, and most of us accept on principle that mindfulness must be a good thing. If you have a sense that mindfulness is something that you need more of — but you’re a little sheepish to admit that you’re not *entirely sure exactly what it is* — don’t worry. You are *so* not alone.

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Certain Patterns of Brain Activity May Protect Against Bipolar Disorder

People who have siblings with bipolar disorder but have not developed the illness themselves have unusually high connectivity within a brain network that is most active during wakeful rest, according to a study reported in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Such connectivity may prevent or delay onset of illness in people whose genetics put them at risk.

Genetics play a strong role in determining who develops bipolar disorder.

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Kansas Lawmakers Move To Box Out Colyer On New Medicaid Restrictions

A high-stakes gambit initiated by Kansas lawmakers Thursday could prove to be the checkmate move that blocks Republican Gov. Jeff Colyer from imposing new Medicaid eligibility restrictions.

Colyer wants a four-year extension of the federal waiver that allowed the state to privatize its \$3 billion Medicaid program and re-name it KanCare in 2013. It currently covers more than 420,000 low-income, elderly and disabled Kansans

Early in the legislative session, lawmakers added language to a budget bill to stop Colyer from seeking federal approval for the eligibility changes.

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A Comprehensive Approach to Suicide Prevention

Effective suicide prevention is comprehensive: it requires a combination of efforts that work together to address different aspects of the problem.

Each strategy is a broad goal that can be advanced through an array of possible activities (i.e., programs, policies, practices, and services). This model of a comprehensive approach was adapted from a model developed for campuses by SPRC and the Jed Foundation, drawing on the U.S. Air Force Suicide Prevention Program.

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In Five-Year Study, Vagus Nerve Stimulation Added to Usual Care Improves Treatment-Resistant Depression Outcomes

Over the course of a five-year study, patients with treatment-resistant depression who were treated with vagus nerve stimulation in addition to a usual care regimen of medication and therapy fared better than those who received usual care only, according to a study published in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*.

The vagus nerve is one of the most important nerves in the human body. It is part of the nervous system that governs involuntary functions, commanding unconscious body procedures, such as keeping the heart rate constant and controlling digestion. It is also involved in emotional regulation and response, for instance, to stress stimuli.

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